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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/521,205	01/12/2005	Kyoichi Sasaki	WATABI.002APC	9027
20995 7590 01/02/2008 KNOBBE MARTENS OLSON & BEAR LLP 2040 MAIN STREET FOURTEENTH FLOOR IRVINE, CA 92614			EXAMINER TRAN, HOANG Q	
			ART UNIT 2874	PAPER NUMBER
			NOTIFICATION DATE 01/02/2008	DELIVERY MODE ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

jcartee@kmob.com
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Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/521,205

Applicant(s)

SASAKI ET AL.

Examiner

Hoang Tran

Art Unit

2874

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 October 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 08/03/2007 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the US Patent to Yamakawa (5,600,747) in view of the US Patent to Shimoji 6,435,728.

In terms of claims 1-4, 8-10, and 17 Yamakawa discloses an optical fiber connection structure wherein optical fibers (49), shown in Fig. 19A, are connected by means of a component for connecting optical fibers comprising two plugs (14), into which at least one optical fiber has been inserted respectively for aligning said optical fibers and connecting them, and an adapter (54) for fixing said plugs, which comprises that the plugs are fixed to the adapter by attaching each plug into which the optical fiber

has been inserted to the adapter in a direction perpendicular to the axial direction of the optical fiber. The plug or adapter is equipped with a latch member (53) and the other has a latch engaging section (Rear portion of cylinder portion 14). The plug or adapter has a guide(s) (57) for alignment and the other is equipped with a member for alignment with engages with said guide. The plugs and adapter have a through-hole(s) for alignment (Central portion [48]). Yamakawa does not disclose wherein each plug is independently detachable from the adapter. Shimoji does teach this feature to facilitate the ease of plugging and unplugging Fig 1A. **A motivation** to make such a modification to Yamakawa would be to make the functional act of unplugging and plugging easier. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply the teachings of Shimoji to the device of Yamakawa in order to facilitate the ease of plugging and unplugging of connectors.

In terms of claims 5-7, the plug is equipped with one or plural ferrules (48), each ferrule of said plug is equipped with a ferrule aligning member capable of sliding in a direction of the center axis of the optical fiber and the ends of ferrules brought face to face with each other are located inside said ferrule aligning member (57) as a result of sliding said ferrule aligning member in a direction of the center axis of the optical fibers.

The method steps of claims 11-16 are disclosed by Yamakawa in the explanation of the separate components functioning together. The resulting structure is the assembly of all the various components aligning as one module. The relevant steps can be found in Figure 1-4. However Yamakawa does not each plug having a slidable

member which is cable of sliding with respect to the two plugs in an axial direction of the optical fiber by sliding each slidable member with respect to the two plugs. Shimoji does teach a slidable member (Fig 1A and 1B) through the means of using a rod as a form alignment and flange clamps to fix the connectors together. **A motivation** to use a slidable structure would be to ensure alignment of the two connectors since the two connectors are hence detachable through plugging and unplugging user functions. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to apply the teachings of Shimoji with the connector of Yamakawa to ensure alignment is proper in a connector capable of being unplug and plug-in together.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-17 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The examiner has issue new grounds of rejection base on the newly amended limitations filed in the RCE 10/04/2007.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hoang Tran whose telephone number is 571-272-5049. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rodney Bovernick can be reached on 571-272-2344. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Ht

Hoang Tran
AU 2874
December 20, 2007

/Michelle R. Connelly-Cushwa/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2874
December 21, 2007